

Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC)

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT)

WISE COUNTY/TOWN OF BIG STONE GAP WATER SHORTAGE

SITUATION REPORT # 12

1400 Hours October 19, 2005

New Information in Bold Italics

WEATHER

Forecast:

Southwest Virginia: Mostly Sunny, High temperatures in the low 80's, Low temperatures in the mid 50's with winds SW 5-10 MPH. There is a 0% chance of precipitation.

NWS Morristown TN Short-term forecast indicates next chance for precipitation is Thursday night, October 20, through Tuesday, October 25. There is a 50% chance of precipitation Friday night, October 21, and 40% chance Saturday, October 22, with a 20% chance the remainder of the period.

EXECUTIVE ACTION

EOC Activation:

The Virginia VEOC is at Increased Readiness condition and augmented with limited staffing.

State of Emergency:

On October 7, 2005, Governor Mark R. Warner declared a state of emergency to exist for Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap to assist these localities in responding to a critical water shortage. Governor Warner directed appropriate assistance be rendered by agencies of the state government to respond to needs in Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap to alleviate adverse conditions created by the water shortage.

Executive Order 99 (2005) has been amended to impose an Open Burning Ban on Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap, effective immediately and continuing until such time as local officials advise the Governor it should be lifted.

Local Situation:

Local Emergency Declared: Wise County declared a local emergency on September 26, 2005.

Local Emergency Declared: Scott County declared a local emergency on October 15, 2005, specifying agricultural drought. There is no indication that this situation will impact the provision of 250,000 gallons of water per day by Scott County to Big Stone Gap.

STATE AGENCIES

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

The VEOC is polling Southwest Virginia localities and the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service to anticipate long-term drought conditions and the impact on agricultural resources.

A VDEM Hazardous Materials Officer is coordinating with Wise County, the Town of Big Stone Gap, and state/local agencies to identify needed resources and continue logistical support. A VDEM Reservist is on site at the Wise County Command Post to assist with logistics and finance.

The VEOC is coordinating requests for assistance from the locality and state agencies and compiling a list of available resources.

The VEOC is facilitating conference calls with the locality and state agencies. ***The next conference call is scheduled for October 20, 2005 at 0930 hours.***

Virginia Department of Health (VDH)

VDH is preparing kits for personal care workers, and supplying home delivered meals that contain water suitable for disabled populations, baby wipes and sanitizer. The Virginia Department of Health Roanoke Regional Public Information Officer (PIO) is on scene to coordinate public information dissemination.

The Office of Drinking Water has offered to help the Town of Big Stone Gap test water. ***Water tests are ongoing. Additional samples were taken to test for sodium levels. Until further notice, the boil water ban is still in effect for the Central area of the town.***

The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) has been put on alert for possible activation to assist the special needs shelter.

Dr. Cantrell of the VDH is creating a Public Service Announcement regarding the sodium levels in the drinking water. It will be distributed today through all news media outlets in the area.

Virginia National Guard (VNG)

The VNG continues distribution and blivet support mission. The nine blivets are placed at the following locations: one at each of the three public schools, one at the Hospital, one at the Nursing Home, one serving the community college/DMME, one at the Special Needs Shelter, and two supporting the Portable Water Processing Plants. The VNG is maintaining the blivets.

The VNG distributed 18 pallets of bottled water to the Town Hall, 2 pallets to Powell Valley High School and 10 pallets to the Senior Citizen Center on Tuesday, October 18, 2005.

State Fire Marshall's Office

The SFMO identified buildings with automatic sprinkler system supplied by Big Stone Gap Water Supply.

Virginia Department of Corrections (VDOC)

The VDOC is refilling blivets and have successfully transported one million gallons of water per week by tanker to the affected areas.

Three Wallens Ridge State Prison (WRSP) tanker trucks refilled the blivet at Lonesome Pine Regional Hospital. After the first tanker unloads at the hospital it will fill up in Appalachia and head to Mount Empire Community College to refill the blivet placed on campus.

Powell Valley Primary, Middle and High Schools will be topped-off every weekend. An on-site water level check of the three blivet sites will be conducted today to gauge daily water consumption.

WRSP also committed to transport an additional 200,000 gallons of water weekly to support the residents on Wallens Ridge Mountain.

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

The VDOT approved the utilization of Right-of-Way for course of water line between Town of Appalachia and Big Stone Gap.

The VDOT has provided the use of its 1610 AM radio system to keep residents informed on water shortage in addition to existing message boards. ***Technical problems with the AM radio stations has delayed their activation.***

A VDOT tractor is being used to pull stainless steel tankers of water.

Department of General Services/Consolidated Labs

VDGS/CL continues to test water samples from alternate water sources.

Virginia Department of Forestry

The VDOF is putting up signs and enforcing the burn ban placed into effect by the Governor in the town limits of Big Stone Gap and the County of Wise. The VDOF will also enforce the burn ban for those areas of Big Stone Gap that are within Scott County.

LOCAL ACTIVITIES

The Town of Big Stone Gap installed a 6-inch water line connecting to the Town of Appalachia's water system. The 24-hour sanitization process began this morning. The line should be ready by noon on October 20, 2005.

Consideration is being given to pumping water from the Powell River at Appalachia to assist with supplying Appalachia's water system, with the potential to produce 400,000 gallons of water per day to the Towns of Big Stone Gap and Appalachia.

The Town of Big Stone Gap leased a portable water processing plant to produce potable water from the Powell River. A "boil water notice" will be placed on the system until testing is complete. ***A second plant arrived today with a projected operational date of Saturday, October 22.***

Raw water input to the town of Big Stone Gap water system totaling 1.5 million gallons per day (gpd) allows the town to keep all users supplied with 'town' water at the "conservation rate" of production. While the water plant is producing the required 1.5 million gpd this production is supplemented by 600,000 gpd.

Water production and projections: Leased Package Plant #1 rated at 500,000 gpd is producing 400,000 gpd; Town of Appalachia 250,000 gpd from Thursday, October 20, 2005; and Leased Package Plant #2 500,000 gpd from Saturday, October 22, 2005.

By Saturday, October 22, 2005 the town is projected to have the capability for input of 1,850,000 gpd. This will be sufficient to maintain supply to all "conservation rate" demands, plus a cushion of 350,000 gpd.

This cushion may not be a noticeable surplus because of previously reported system losses. However, it could fill the area holding tanks that are presently low. The town relies on production rates sufficient to supply daily demand and to keep full a number of holding tanks throughout the service area. The daily "conservation rate" of production does not allow for them to be refilled.

Town officials and the VDH are discouraging private individuals from purchasing private tanks. If they choose to purchase a private water tank they must break their connection to the town water supply in order to eliminate cross contamination.

A full battery of chemical tests on Clinch Haven Farms well and water drawn from the Hairy Hole Cave began October 17, 2005. Installation of a pipeline from the cave to the Big Stone Gap Water Treatment Plant is waiting on one fitting that should be completed by this afternoon.

Increased security will be put in place during Halloween weekend to protect blivets with added patrols by county and town law enforcement agencies.

The Virginia Rural Water Association will provide the Town of Big Stone Gap two Circuit Riders through October 21 to assist with locating leaks in the water distribution system.

A distribution site opened at Town Hall October 18, 2005 to give out bottled water to low-income individuals on a low sodium diet. In four hours 2100 gallons were distributed. The distribution method is in the process of being reevaluated.

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